

REMARKS

I. Status of the Application

By the present amendment, Applicant hereby amends claims 13, 14, 16 and 30.

Applicant also hereby cancels claims 9-12 and 15 and 17 without prejudice or disclaimer.

Further, by the present amendment, Applicant hereby adds new claims 32-34. Claims 13, 14, 16 and 29-34 are all the claims pending in the application.

Claims 9-17 and 29-31 have been rejected.

The present amendment addresses each point of objection and rejection raised by the Examiner. Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

II. Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant thanks the Examiner for indicating that claims 12, 17, 29 and 31 have been allowed. Applicant also thanks the Examiner for indicating that claims 15 and 30 would be allowable if amended to correct the informalities noted by the Examiner.

Accordingly, Applicant hereby amends claim 30, as set forth above, to correct the informalities noted by the Examiner. Thus, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 30 is immediately allowable.

Further, Applicant submits that since new claims 32-34 depend from claim 29, which has been allowed, these claims are also immediately allowable

III. Claim Objections

The Examiner has objected to claims 15 and 30 due to various informalities.

Since claim 15 has been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, the objection with respect to claim 15 is now moot.

Further, claim 30 has been amended, as set forth above, to correct the informalities noted by the Examiner. As such, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw this objection.

IV. Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

A. Claims 9 and 10

The Examiner has rejected claims 9 and 10 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the Prior Art as admitted by Applicant, in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,124,153 to Lee et al. (hereinafter “Lee”), further in view of U.S. Patent Publication No. 2003/0025127 A1 to Yanai et al. (hereinafter “Yanai”), and further in view of Japanese Patent Application No. 2003-017502A to Nakamura (hereinafter “Nakamura”).

Applicant has canceled claims 9 and 10 without prejudice or disclaimer and, therefore, the Examiner’s rejections with respect to these claims are now moot.

B. Claims 11 and 16

The Examiner has also rejected claims 11 and 16 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the Prior Art as admitted by Applicant, in view of Yanai, and further in view of Nakamura.

Applicant has canceled claim 11 without prejudice or disclaimer and, therefore, the Examiner’s rejections with respect to this claim is now moot.

Further, Applicant has amended claim 16 so as to depend from allowable claim 29 and, therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 16 is immediately allowable *at least* by virtue of its dependence on allowable claim 29.

C. Claim 13

The Examiner has rejected claim 13 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the Prior Art as admitted by Applicant, in view of Yanai, further in view of Nakamura, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,757,050 to Adler et al.

Applicant has amended claim 13 so as to depend from allowable claim 29 and, therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 13 is immediately allowable *at least* by virtue of its dependence on allowable claim 29.

D. Claim 14

The Examiner has rejected claim 14 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the Prior Art as admitted by Applicant, in view of Yanai, further in view of Nakamura, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,757,050 to Adler et al.

Applicant has amended claim 14 so as to depend from allowable claim 29 and, therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 14 is immediately allowable *at least* by virtue of its dependence on allowable claim 29.

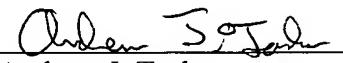
V. Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the

Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

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